

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, Applicants note that the Office Action indicates that prior art reference EP 1 260 722 A2, which was listed on the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed November 22, 2005, was not considered by the Examiner. This reference, however, corresponds to US 2002/0178852, which was also filed in the same IDS and was considered by the Examiner. Additionally, the other references listed on the same IDS that were not considered by the Examiner were considered in response to another IDS filed May 9, 2006.

Favorable consideration and allowance of claims 1 and 3-12 are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Akiyama (JP 2003-269463). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection as set forth below.

Claim 1 is amended herein to further define the relationship between the height (H1) of the retaining piece body in the direction crossing the axial direction of the roller and the diameter (Dw) of the roller (i.e., $H1 < Dw$), and the relationship between the height (H2) of the first and the second arm portions in the direction crossing the axial direction of the roller and the width (W) of the first and the second guide grooves (i.e., $H2 < W$). Claim 1 is further amended to include the limitations of claim 2, which further defines the height of the first

and second arm portions relative to the diameter of the roller. Claim 2 is canceled.

Claim 3, which further defines the first and the second arm portions recited in claim 1 by claiming a length thereof, is amended to depend from claim 1. Claim 8 is amended to change "H7" to "H8" and "H8" to "H7". Claim 11, which further defines the retaining pieces recited in claim 1, is amended to be dependent from claim 1.

Although claims 3-12 were previously withdrawn, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims should be examined in light of the amendments to the claims.

Claims 1 and 3-12 have common construction of the linear guide device having a rail, a slider, end caps, a plurality of rollers, a circulation channels and retaining pieces. In particular, all of the amended claims provide common a retaining piece body that have a first arm portion fitting a first guide groove, a second arm portion fitting a second guide groove. The claimed linear guide device has advantages over the prior art including: suppressing the skew of roller, suppressing increase of sound level caused by collision between rollers, and suppressing early wear of a retaining piece and ensuring smooth actuation of a slider. See, e.g., paragraphs [0004]-[0006], [0019]-[0020], and [0028]-[0036] and Figs. 19 and 20.

Applicants submit that Akiyama does not expressly or inherently disclose the relationship claimed in amended claim 1 that the height of the first and the second arm portions in the direction crossing the axial direction of the roller is defined as a height that satisfies the conditional relation: $0.2 \leq H2/Dw \leq 0.5$, where H2 represents the height of the arm portions and Dw represents the diameter of the roller. As described in paragraphs [0034]-[0036] and illustrated in FIGS. 19-20, for example, by defining the height H2 of the first and the second arm portions 19, 20 to a height that satisfies the conditional relation: $0.2 \leq H2/Dw \leq 0.5$, skew of the roller 9 at a large angle can be suppressed, and increase of the moving resistance of the slider 2 by the frictional force F caused to the contact portion between the arm portions 19, 20 and guide grooves 22, 23 when the roller 9 rolls along the direction changing channel 11 for rolling elements in the end cap 3 can be suppressed. This is the case because the maximum stress of the arm portions can be decreased when the roller rolls along the direction changing channel, when the conditional relation: $0.2 \leq H2/Dw \leq 0.5$ is satisfied.

None of the disclosures of Akiyama correspond to the aforementioned feature of amended claim 1. In particular, the reference discloses rollers 14, separators 15 and protruding piece 17, but these features do not have the relationship claimed in claim 1. Thus, amended claim 1 is patentable over Akiyama.

Claims 3-12 are patentable due to their dependence from claim 1.

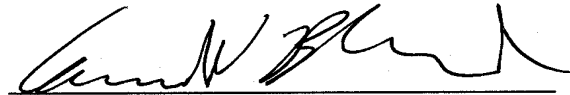
In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #038921.57101US).

Respectfully submitted,

December 18, 2008



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